

This week, I jointly introduced anti-fraud legislation, [H.R. 6130](#), the Strengthening Medicare Anti-Fraud Measures Act. This bipartisan legislation would close a major loophole in the Medicare system and allow the Justice Department to significantly expand its ability to pursue and prosecute those who commit Medicare fraud.

At a hearing on Medicare fraud in June before the House Ways and Means Committee, the committee on which I sit, the Chief Counsel for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Inspector General (OIG), an independent agency watchdog, testified to the committee about some alarming examples of fraud and abuse in the Medicare program.

Examples of this fraud include overbilling for services, billing for services never rendered, and billing on behalf of phantom beneficiaries. Currently, a person employed by a company that perpetrates Medicare fraud may switch to a different company and continue doing business with Medicare. The OIG asked the Ways & Means Committee for legislation to provide the Justice Department with several tools to improve their ability to combat these abuses.

Following on this advice, our bill would eliminate these opportunities for “second chance fraud” by ensuring that these guilty parties are never allowed to do business with Medicare again.

This is important because an employee at a firm under investigation will often jump ship before that business is convicted and begin practicing the same fraudulent activity at another company.

The bill also offers the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) expanded authority over the companies involved in fraud. OIG will now be allowed to prevent parent companies whose subsidiaries are found guilty of Medicare fraud from continuing to do business with Medicare themselves.

Medicare fraud is a crime against senior citizens, legitimate health care providers, and every American who pays taxes. It is imperative for us to remain vigilant to prevent Medicare fraud, and to ensure that those who do commit fraud don't get a second chance at their crimes. With Medicare already on an unsustainable fiscal path, it is inexcusable to allow more and more taxpayer dollars to be defrauded. Law enforcement officials have informed Congress that there are gaps in our current anti-fraud laws, and I am pleased to offer legislation that would close the loopholes so that these offenders will pay the price for their crimes.

For more information on the June hearing on fraud, waste, and abuse in the Medicare program, please [click here](#).